

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system comprising:
 - a fuel-line water recovery tank collecting water discharged from a fuel electrode outlet of a fuel cell;
 - a fuel-line water discharge discriminator discriminating to find whether collected water in the fuel-line water recovery tank is to be discharged;
 - a combustor disposed ~~in~~ a downstream of a fuel-line water discharge port of the fuel-line water recovery tank to allow fuel expelled from the fuel-line water discharge port to be combusted with oxidant expelled from an oxidant electrode outlet of the fuel cell; ~~[[and]]~~
 - a fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit operative to open and close a fuel-line water discharge flow passage between the fuel-line water discharge port and the combustor; ~~wherein~~ and
 - a second water recovery tank disposed between the combustor and the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit,
 - wherein when the fuel-line water discharge discriminator discriminates that the collected water is to be discharged, the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit is opened.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 1 ~~[[2]]~~, wherein the second water recovery tank includes an oxidant-line water recovery tank that collects water discharged from the oxidant electrode outlet of the fuel cell.
4. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 3, further comprising:
 - an oxidant-line water discharge flow passage closure unit operative to open and close an oxidant-line water discharge flow passage extending from a lower portion of the second water recovery tank; and

an oxidant-line water discharge discriminator discriminating to find whether collected water in the second water recovery tank is to be discharged; wherein

when the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit is opened or ~~during~~ when a given time interval has elapsed after the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit ~~has been~~ was closed, the oxidant-line water discharge flow passage closure unit is not opened even if the oxidant-line water discharge discriminator discriminates to discharge the collected water from the second water recovery tank.

5. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a fuel pressure detector disposed in a fuel gas flow passage connected to a fuel electrode inlet of the fuel cell to detect a fuel pressure; wherein

when the fuel pressure detected by the fuel pressure detector drops below a given value after the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit has been opened, the fuel-line water discharge discriminator discriminates that discharging of the collected water in the fuel-line water recovery tank has been completed.

6. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell system according to claim 5, wherein the fuel-line water discharge flow passage has a flow sectional area smaller than a flow sectional area of a ~~downstream~~ of the fuel-line water discharge flow passage.

7. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a fuel flow rate detector disposed in a fuel electrode inlet of the fuel cell to measure the flow rate of fuel gas; wherein

when the flow rate of fuel detected by the fuel flow rate detector exceeds a given value, the fuel-line water discharge discriminator discriminates that discharging of the collected water in the fuel-line water recovery tank has been completed.

8. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 1, wherein the fuel-line water discharge discriminator executes discrimination as to discharging of water based on at least any one of an operating load of the fuel cell, the temperature of the fuel-line and a time interval elapsed after the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit has been previously closed.

9. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 1, further comprising:
a fuel-line gas discharge discriminator discriminating to find whether fuel expelled from the fuel electrode outlet of the fuel cell is to be discharged to a system outside; wherein
when the fuel is discharged to the system outside, the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit is opened.
10. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 9, further comprising:
a fuel pressure detector disposed in a fuel electrode inlet of the fuel cell to detect a fuel pressure; wherein
on the basis of a time interval elapsed from a timing at which, after the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit has been opened, a fuel pressure detected by the fuel pressure detector drops below a given value, the fuel-line gas discharge discriminator discriminates that discharging of fuel-line gas has been completed.
11. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 9, further comprising:
a fuel flow rate detector disposed in a fuel gas flow passage connected to a fuel electrode inlet of the fuel cell to measure the flow rate of fuel gas; wherein
on the basis of the flow rate of the fuel detected by the fuel flow rate detector and a fuel consumption rate predicted from an operating load of the fuel cell, the fuel-line gas discharge discriminator discriminates to find whether discharging of fuel-line gas to the system outside has been completed.
12. (Original) The fuel cell system according to claim 9, wherein the fuel-line gas discharge discriminator executes discrimination as to discharging of fuel gas based on at least any one of an operating load of the fuel cell, a time interval elapsed after the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit has been previously closed, and a voltage of the fuel cell.
13. (Currently Amended) A fuel cell system comprising:
a fuel-line water recovery tank collecting water discharged from a fuel electrode outlet of a fuel cell;
fuel-line water discharge discriminating means for discriminating to find whether collected water in the fuel-line water recovery tank is to be discharged;

a combustor disposed ~~in~~ a downstream of a fuel-line water discharge port of the fuel-line water recovery tank to allow fuel expelled from the fuel-line water discharge port to be combusted with oxidant expelled from an oxidant electrode outlet of the fuel cell; ~~[[and]]~~

fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure means operative to open and close a fuel-line water discharge flow passage between the fuel-line water discharge port and the combustor; and wherein

a second water recovery tank disposed between the combustor and the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure means, wherein

when the fuel-line water discharge discriminating means discriminates that the collected water is to be discharged, the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure means is opened.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a fuel cell system, the method comprising:

preparing a fuel cell having a fuel electrode outlet and an oxidant electrode outlet;

preparing a fuel-line water recovery tank collecting water discharged from the fuel electrode outlet;

preparing a combustor disposed ~~in~~ a downstream of a fuel-line water discharge port of the fuel-line water recovery tank;

preparing ~~[[an]]~~ a fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit operative to open and close a fuel-line water discharge flow passage between the fuel-line water discharge port and the combustor;

preparing a second water recovery tank disposed between the combustor and the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit;

executing discrimination by a fuel-line water discharge discriminator to find whether collected water in the fuel-line water recovery tank is to be discharged;

combusting fuel, expelled from the fuel-line water discharge port, with oxidant, expelled from the oxidant electrode outlet, in the combustor; and

opening the fuel-line water discharge flow passage closure unit when the fuel-line water discharge discriminator discriminates that the collected water is to be discharged.